DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 232 830 RC 014 247

AUTHOR Gerace, Frank A.; Carkin, Gary
TITLE Drama in Development: Its Integration in Non-Formal Education. Occasional Paper #4.
INSTITUTION Michigan State Univ., East Lansing. Non-Formal Education Information Center.
SPONS AGENCY Agency for International Development (IDCA), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 20p.
AVAILABLE FROM NFE Information Center, Michigan State University, 237 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824 (while supply lasts).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Attitude Change; Cultural Awareness; Developing Nations; *Drama; Dramatics; Economic Development; *Educational Objectives; Fine Arts; Folk Culture; *Integrated Activities; Mass Media; Mass Media Effects; National Programs; *Nonformal Education; Patriotism; Professional Training; *Social Change

ABSTRACT

Drama and non-formal education (NFE), with their links to real life, can be effective partners in achieving developmental goals. The freedom in NFE from some of the structural features of formal schooling presents a dynamic opportunity for the arts, with their affective characteristics, to help in achieving affective goals of education and development; education for socioeconomic development, a principal area of NFE, includes attitude change as a principal objective. If dramatic production is to be an effective element in NFE, it must be good theater; it must allow audiences to identify with the characters, situations and dialog of the presentation. To utilize drama for developmental purposes, national planners should collaborate with dramatic artists, educators, and existing governmental agencies in developing training programs and producing material for the mass media, which would stimulate awareness of national problems and motivate action for change which could be supported by formal educational and other services. The results of such an integrated approach to national development could stimulate the work of artists and relate their work to the development process, ignite and unite the national spirit for purposes of development, and support the goals of formal educators through use of a non-formal educational strategy. (MH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED232830

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

OCCASIONAL PAPER #4

Drama in Development: Its Integration in Non-Formal Education

Frank A. Gerace
Gary Carkin

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INFORMATION CENTER
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN 48824

RC 014247

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Mary Joy Ingozzi
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

OCCASIONAL PAPER #4

Drama in Development: Its Integration in Non-Formal Education

Frank A. Gerace
Gary Carkin

1978

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INFORMATION CENTER
Institute for International Studies in Education
513 Erickson Hall
College of Education, Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824, USA
(517) 355-5522

INTRODUCTION

Through its series of Occasional Papers, the NFE Information Center seeks to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among those pioneering in the practice of non-formal education. In dynamic, relatively young fields of inquiry and experimentation it is especially important to bring budding "ideas in progress" to the light of public scrutiny. We intend the papers in this series to provoke critical discussion and to contribute to the generation of knowledge about non-formal education.

In this essay, Frank Gerace and Gary Carkin draw upon their community work in Asia and South America to consider the role of drama in development. They stress the importance of coordinating dramatic art in NFE with other key components of the national education plan. Pointing out that developmental theater form must be related to societal form and reflect popular concerns, the authors examine both organizational and aesthetic dimensions of producing theater for development.

We invite your participation in this dialogue and welcome your comments.

Joan M. Claffey
Director
Non-Formal Education Information Center

This series of Occasional Papers is published by the Non-Formal Education Information Center in cooperation with the Agency for International Development. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the NFE Information Center or AID.

Drama in Development

Its Integration in Non-Formal Education

Frank A. Gerace

Gary Carkin

One of the most apt descriptions concerning the relationship of drama to life was made by Shakesphere in Act III of Hamlet:

Suit the action to the word,
the word to the action;
With this special observance,
that you o'er-step not the modesty of nature:
for any thing so overdone
is from the purpose of playing, whose end,
both at the first and now, was and is,
to hold, as it were,
the mirror up to nature.

Drama, with its links to real life, and non-formal education, with its similar links, can be surprisingly effective partners in achieving some goals of development.

Throughout the *third world*, national planners are calling for massive efforts to meet rising social, economic, and educational demands. Foremost among the efforts expended by developing nations have been those in the educational area. Current evaluations of the educational task facing these nations, however, indicate a "crisis." Economic and demographic criteria are dictating the need for serious re-examination of existing educational systems, particularly those which are designed around tradi-

tional components such as a rigid curriculum, professionally trained teachers, and specialized buildings. Coombs (1973) comments that:

> this strategy of linear expansion accomplished -- much measured by its own criteria of success -- the upward movement of statistics of enrollments and participation rates. Indeed, it was so successful that, together with other forces at work, it propelled nation after nation into a world-wide educational crisis by the start of the 1970's.
>
> On its face, it was a crisis of rising student numbers, rising unit costs, and growing financial constraints. Down deeper, however, it was basically a crisis of maladjustment between educational systems that had grown remarkably in size but in the process had changed their ways too little to keep pace with the rapidly changing world around them.[1]

Non-formal education has been increasingly proposed as a mode of education which is especially suited to certain development goals. Its proponents believe that non-formal education possesses a unique flexibility and adaptability to the concrete situations facing specific students, social systems, economic conditions, and educational needs. The single unifying theme of the still elusive concept of NFE is that it implies no single feature or component which is totally indispensable. Content, media, course duration and structure, admission criteria, staffing, facilities, and all other structural components are dependent upon the developmental task and the environment which conditions the task. Structure, in other words, hinges upon function or desired outcome. Brembeck (1973) (see footnote below) contends that any alternative to formal schooling must consider the variation of those very attributes which in the "schooling model" cannot be altered without destroying the integrity of the system.

1. Coombs, Philip H., "How Shall We Plan Nonformal Education" in Brembeck, Cole, S., and Thompson, Timothy J., New Strategies for Educational Development: The Cross-Cultural Search for Nonformal Alternatives. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973. p. 147.

The general features of NFE have been analyzed extensively by Coombs and Ahmed (1974), Brembeck (1973), Paulston (1972), Evans and Smith (1972), and others. Briefly, there are several basic characteristics of NFE:

- Great emphasis is placed on the relevance of the subject matter to the immediate, real-life needs of the learner.
- Courses are scheduled at times and places convenient to the working participant.
- Entry requirements are not based on previous schooling.
- Courses are brief and topic- and issue-centered.
- Individual projects frequently are part of larger development programs.
- Certificates or diplomas are not central to the system.

An additional characteristic often is a per capita and/or instructional unit cost which is substantially lower than that of traditional education modes.

Although NFE is being examined today with a new perspective, its roots go deep in the educational system, as do the roots of the arts. In addition, the arts have long served in ways closely allied to the goals of developmental education. Throughout the world, for example, perhaps the strongest single force in evoking national pride is the experience of hearing and singing the national anthem. Music, dance, theater, and the illustrative arts are uniquely effective in preserving and furthering reflection on national origins and aims.

The immediate appropriateness of the arts for education resides in their power to reach the participant on the level of feelings and the spirit. Although education is rediscovering the affective domain, it has not been an easy task to incorporate this dimension into

traditional instruction.

The freedom in NFE from some of the structural features of formal schooling, however, presents a dynamic opportunity for the arts, with their affective characteristics, to help in achieving affective goals of education and development. Furthermore, education for socio-economic development, a principal arena of NFE, includes attitude change as a principal objective. It is no longer novel to suggest that attitudes, especially of traditional adults, are not effectively reached by merely cognitive means (Freire, 1971, and Knowles, 1973).

The unique power of the arts in NFE, though, is not only a function of their affective nature. The arts also are particularly suited for more pragmatic and administrative reasons. The arts are an invaluable medium for NFE if it is to preserve its flexibility and actually constitute an advantage over traditional schooling.

While NFE programs seek flexibility and freedom from many of the structural elements of other instructional modes, in practice the customs and conveniences of teachers and learners often prevent achievement of these desired characteristics. A program, for example, which tries to de-emphasize the certificate of completion can instead evolve into a credentialing system based on class, elitist, or economic values. Programs destined to enrich the existence of rural dwellers are utilized as conduits to the urban clerk or "tinterillo" condition. The same dysfunctional results identified with traditional schooling plagues much of NFE; ironically, this is the same dysfunction which originally gave rise to more flexible education. The hand which has held the book rarely returns to the hoe.

This absorption of NFE into the societally demanded function of schooling has caused some observers recently to re-assess their earlier enthusiasm for the new educational mode (Carnoy, 1974). Grandstaff comments that "if the development of study and practice under the rubric of 'non-formal education' does not proceed from a thoroughly reconsidered

conceptual framework, there is a very real possibility that planning and practice in 'non-formal education' will embody the schooling mode as an unexamined assumption."[2]

The arts, however, by definition and practice are free from the constraints of curricula, school terms, credentialling, and other "prescribed" elements of schooling. The arts usually are so removed from the schcol setting that neither administrators nor participants are inclined or able to limit access, determine content, or expect diplomas. The arts present a viable medium for NFE, bringing to this mode both affective power and independence from schooling. Developmental objectives incorporated into an artistic medium will be obtained to the extent that artistic values are successful in communicating experiences.

The Arts in Out-of-School Education

Paris. Florence. Venice. Such cities are extraordinarily striking examples of environments inspired through artists working with images which reflected primal community concerns. Such artistic focus, reinforcing and bringing variety to basic themes, both human and cosmic, resulted in the production of some of the finest work in art the world has ever known.

Artistic products incorporating developmental themes are not, of course, only past phenomena. Contemporary artists often include regional or national concerns in their art. Developmental messages may be integrated with art forms in an unconscious way, yet their expressive strength helps to support the total developmental process. Such educational by-products have been called informal education or that which is

2. Grandstaff, Marvin. "Educational History and Nonformal Education: A Methodological Strategy" in Axinn, George H., et al. Non-formal Education and the Structure of Culture. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, Institute for International Studies in Education, 1974. (ERIC ED 103 307) p. 19.

"caught", as well as "taught" (Brembeck, 1974).

The work of the artist, however, need not be an unplanned part of the developmental process. Just as NFE strategy may be planned and related to total national concerns, so, too, the use of the arts for NFE purposes needs to be consciously integrated into the total system. Too often, even when planned, efforts to incorporate the arts and to involve artists with the work of nation-building have been fragmented, producing a good national mural here, a dance-drama with a birth control message there, and a sculpture or painting with greater or lesser significance to developmental issues here and there.

Also, if the arts are to be effective in sponsoring attitude change and in communicating messages relevant to the development process, if the arts are to be a viable element in the process of NFE, then the need for reinforcement of national developmental themes must be met. National planning, which encourages integration of the work of artists with that of educators and planners must become a priority.

As suggested above, to achieve national developmental goals, the arts need to be integrated with and applied to many, not isolated, developmental objectives. A "wholistic" approach to social change is, thus, implied. This is an approach which concerns itself with a number of developmental goals simultaneously. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the potential of dramatic art to function within such a framework.

Drama in Development

The use of drama to confront and offer solutions to social problems and to suggest changed patterns of behavior is well known. Early in history, man depicted his needs and communal objectives through ritualized action and dance. It is almost possible to say that man attempted to educate his gods, to elicit a behavioral change from them, and to excite them to a more sympathetic response in the area of man's needs.

From early ritual through Medieval morality plays to 19th Century melodrama, drama has served to communicate ideas, as well as to solidify communities.

The work of such modern playrights as Ibsen, Shaw, Brecht, Odets, and Arthur Miller has effected a great awareness of social inequities and, as a result, stimulated efforts toward change in the social fabric.

In recent years, interest among developers, communication experts, and artists, has increased in the use of popular theater and folk media in development. The phenomenon is not limited to developing nations, but can be seen in the "street theaters" and "mobile theaters" of European and North American nations. The underlying objective of these simply staged, portable productions is to increase awareness in local audiences of pressing political, social, and economic issues.

Examples of these kinds of efforts are numerous and include El Teatro Camposino, which addresses itself to the political and social struggle of the Mexican-American in the United States (Hostetler, 1974). In Jamaica, the folk program, Drama for Progress, helps illiterate villagers grasp why and how they can learn to read and write (Gillette, 1974). Indonesian artists incorporate developmental messages in such indigenous dramas as the Wayang and the Ludruck (Colletta, 1974). In India, UNESCO has sponsored interest in the "Integrated Use of Folk Media and Mass Media in Family Planning Communication Programs." The UNESCO position contends that

> the role of mass media in developmental communication is crucial and that these media should be used in a systematic and integrated fashion with extension work. Research has established the fact that behavioral change directly attributable to mass media varies from 10 to 15 percent, and that this percentage goes up to 54 percent when the mass media and extension work are integrated.
>
> (Mathur, 1974)

This UNESCO position underscores the need to extend the audience for the purposes of developmental education through the means of mass media. It also underscores the need to relate mass media production to more formal extension service work. Equally important is the need to integrate such programming *externally* with the work of existing national agencies and *internally* with the structure and nature of a medium such as drama and its relationship to the developmental message.

External Integration

The first demand upon a system utilizing dramatic art in NFE is that it be integrally related to other relevant components of the national system. For too long, developing countries have suffered from spotty attempts at development in the educational sphere, as well as in others. Lack of integration has led to squandering of needed efforts, funds, and talents, but perhaps more seriously has undermined the will to serve by many idealistic planners and educators. Unintegrated programs often are the legacy of funded experiments fostered by international agencies.

At times, the basic infrastructure of a developing nation is not able to incorporate the innovations launched by outstanding public servants. The examples of success, often the result of idiosyncratic combinations of personnel and environment, are never properly analyzed for implementation within the larger system. As a result, they have become semi-models to be adapted or not according to whim, enthusiasm, good will, or other random combination of noncontrolled criteria. One report from Southeast Asia is particularly graphic:

> "In the field, we found a wealth of existing community resources: government outreach programs in agriculture, health, family planning, skill training, and basic education; indigenous, quasi-government (voluntary) and government institutions ranging from women's groups to scouting movements and cooperatives; and many talented people

> from local artisans, entertainers, and religious leaders to teachers, health workers, and agricultural extension agents. We also found little coordination of efforts among this array of potential resources. In fact, groups frequently worked at cross purposes to one another. This was particularly true of external efforts, i. e., government extension, when applied to the village context. . . Instead of seeing the community as a "web" of interrelated problems, concerns, and solutions, a fragmented outlook prevailed in which problems were isolated and attacked as if there was no connective tissue in the human experience. . ."
>
> (Colletta, 1976)

"A 'web' of interrelated problems, concerns, and solutions." It is to this *web* that drama in development may address itself. On the external or interface level, dramatic art must be integrated horizontally -- with both complementary educational activities and non-educational factors in the same geographic area -- and also vertically with organizations and activities at higher levels capable of nourishing and backstopping local educational talent (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974).

However, for dramatic art to be a valid component of educational programs, drama programs must not only be integrated externally with other developmental resources, but also must be integrated internally in terms of the demands of art itself. If dramatic production is to be an effective element in NFE, it must be good theater. It need not necessarily be sophisticated or complex theater, but it must be good and sound theater.

Internal Integration of Drama for Development

What is "good" theater? The term has as many definitions, perhaps, as audiences. Theater, to communicate experiences fully, must work

through the norms of its audience and the experiences which form the collective body of the beliefs and customs of audience members. Theater which serves development purposes should seek to relate its "messages" with the deep-rooted, often unconscious drives which form the life-perspective of its audience. If the strong affective component of drama, as noted earlier in this paper, is to function fully, then productions must be created which allow an audience to identify with the characters, situations, and dialog of the presentation.

Such a suggestion may appear to be self-evident, yet it is, unfortunately, a fact that too often drama containing a high cognitive component limits itself to less than full dramatic potential. Earlier, we cited examples of recent efforts to integrate developmental concerns with traditional dramatic media (Hostetler, 1974; Gillette, 1974; and Colletta, 1974). Much of this work is effective, especially in communicating specific messages through a medium accepted by the audience which it serves. Too often, however, particularly in artistic groups where developmental zeal outruns dramatic expertise, the result is didactic theater, drama devoid of any real experiential value.

The Need for Training

If it is generally true that specialized agencies, professional groups, and different ministries have not appreciated the need for integration, it is even more true that t e aims and methods of the persons and agencies devoted to the arts have not been understood by more "pragmatic" planners. This lack of communication and coordination has hampered efforts toward integrated NFE and has relegated the arts to a "luxury" or "experimental" status. The encouraging insistence upon "integrated rural development" can take into account the contributions of the arts.

Training in dramatic art which supports integration of internal dramatic elements in a culturally delimited fashion is necessary and

of importance to both national planners and dramatic artists. Yet, seldom are facilities for training theater artists adequate in developing countries or are they operationalized in such a way as to accomodate theater as an agent for development.

Training which nourishes the skills of writing, acting, and directing in order to integrate developmental concerns with already existing cultural forms of a people or community needs to be examined and established. In addition, there must be evaluation of the linkage which affords the greatest impact which is desired. The training of playwrights who move characters with insight within a framework of contemporary problems, and directors capable of fully illuminating the *humanness* of the questions involved, is of prime concern to theater training programs within the developmental context. So, too, are actors, designers, and technicians who are willing to subordinate ego and personal aggrandizement to the work of the playwright and to developmental themes.

Ideally, a system utilizing dramatic art for developmental purposes needs to sponsor collaboration between artists, national planners, and educators, and this must be accomplished from the outset. Planners and educators need to use a "grass roots" approach to research areas of developmental concern and, through analysis of these areas, arrive at objectives for behavioral change that are in line with popular wishes. The objectives of nationals, planners and educators can then be integrated in terms of theme and content with the work of development artists in the production of dramatic material. Finally, as productions are aired to stimulate awareness of problems in accordance with a NFE strategy, more formal educational services can support and utilize the increased awareness and motivation on the part of the population in a way which supplies learners with specific instruction and/or materials which will help to alleviate the problem.

The value of culturally integrated, modern dramatic modes for non-formal education is severalfold. First, drama that concerns itself

with the cares and concerns of the common person can depict a people's confrontation with the existential forces which play their part in the struggle for selfhood. Through such a base, development problems common to the national community may be examined and analyzed. Focus upon traditional values, life styles, and modes of behavior unique to a culture can reinforce identification with national goals and act as a unique national forum. Thus, a culturally delimited dramatic mode can be seen as being anti-imperialistic, evolving as it does, from both national concerns and the communal roots of the people. Consequently, suggestions for change may be seen less as directives from above or without, but more as answers to needs from within the culture.

A second important factor in considering a culturally delimited dramatic mode for NFE is its suitability for exposure through the mass media. A psychological orientation to character, realistic treatment of setting, plot, as well as theme, allows easy transference to intimate media. Creation of characters who capture the *mythic* imagination of audiences and who may become true national folk heroes can, also, sponsor on-going interest. This can occur within a "series" wherein developmental themes may be scheduled for reinforcement at intervals, while being integrated with other concerns in a continually rotating fashion. Thus, a wholistic approach to developmental issues can be operationalized through constant dramatic productions utilizing the mass media of radio, television, and film, as well as the stage.

In addition, the possibility of including traditional or indigenous drama within the psychological format of a story allows for development of other messages within the folk media presented. Or, it may allow for messages which serve to reinforce the developmental theme of the basic program. The on-going sense of value which such traditional forms have in the life of a culture, thus, can be communicated.

Integration, then becomes not only a matter of training for a "development aesthetic" in dramatic art but also for the transference

of such an aesthetic through several media: the open stage, radio, television, and film. Through such exposure, basic themes may be reinforced. In addition, revenues from the distribution of film, radio, and television shows may be generated nationally or as the result of interest from countries with similar developmental problems.

To summarize, such a strategy calls upon national planners to collaborate with dramatic artists, educators, and existing governmental agencies in developing training programs and producing materials for the mass media which could stimulate awareness of national problems and motivate action for change which could be supported by formal educational and other services.

The results of such an integrated approach to national development could stimulate the work of artists and relate their work to the development process. It could ignite and unite the national spirit for purposes of development. And it could support the goals of formal educators through use of a non-formal educational strategy.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Brembeck, Cole S., and Grandstaff, Marvin. Non-Formal Education as an Alternative to Schooling. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, Institute for International Studies in Education, 1974. (ERIC ED 103 308)

Brembeck, Cole S., and Thompson, Timothy J. New Strategies for Educational Development: The Cross-Cultural Search for Nonformal Alternatives. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Co., 1973.

Carnoy, Martin. "Notas Criticas al Informe de la Comision Faure." Revisita del Centro de Estudios Educativos (Mexico), 1974. 4:4:95-100.

Colletta, Nat J. "Participating Research or Participation Put-on: Reflections on the Research Phase of an Indonesian Experiment in Nonformal Education." Convergence, 1976. 9:3:32-44.

Coombs, Phillip H. "How Shall We Plan Nonformal Education?" in Brembeck, Cole S., and Thompson, Timothy H. New Strategies for Educational Development: The Cross-Cultural Search for Nonformal Alternatives. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Co., 1973.

Coombs, Philip H., and Ahmed, Manzoor. Attacking Rural Poverty: How Nonformal Education Can Help. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

Evans, David R., and Smith, William A. Non Formal Education. Paper presented at World Education Conference. University of Massachusetts. Amherst, Massachusetts: December 2, 1972.

Freire, Paulo. Pedagonia del Oprimido. Barcelona: Biblicteca Neuva, 1971. English translation: Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Heider, 1970.

Gillette, Author. "Rough" Theatre Serves Literacy in Jamaica. Paris: UNESCO Features No. 667, 1974. Reviewed in Instructional Technology Report, No. 12. Washington, D. C.: Academy for Educational Development, 1975.

Grandstaff, Marvis. "Educational History and Nonformal Education: A Methodological Strategy" in Atinn, George H., et al., Nonformal Education and the Structure of Culture. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, Institute for International Studies in Education, 1974. (ERIC ED 103 307)

Hostetler, Susan. "Non-Formal Education at Work in the United States. El Teatro Campesino: Form Worker's Theater," in Instructional Technology Report, No. 12. Washington, D. C.: Academy for Educational Development, 1975.

Knowles, Malcolm. The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co., 1973.

Mathur, K. B. Paper delivered at UNESCO sponsored New Delhi Seminar and Workshop on Folk Media, October, 1974. Reviewed in Instructional Technology Report, No. 12. Washington, D. C.: Academy for Educational Development, 1975.

Paulston, Rolland G., ed. Non Formal Education: An Annotated International Bibliography. New York: Praeger, 1972.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Frank Gerace has been involved with non-formal education programs in Peru, Chile, Bolivia, and other Latin American countries. Presently, Dr. Gerace is on leave from the University of New Mexico's Department of Speech Communication to work in a functional literacy project involving farmers in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Gary Carkin's experience in the field includes two years with the International Voluntary Services in Vietnam as an educator, and four years in Thailand where he worked with theater and development projects connected with universities there. He is presently engaged in doctoral studies at Michigan State University related to theater in development.